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B8-0166/2014 }
B8-0173/2014 }
B8-0176/2014 }
B8-0178/2014 }
B8-0179/2014 } RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of the Rules of Procedure

replacing the motions by the following groups:

PPE (B8-0166/2014)
Verts/ALE (B8-0173/2014)
S&D (B8-0176/2014)
ECR (B8-0178/2014)
ALDE (B8-0179/2014)

on human rights in Uzbekistan
(2014/2904(RSP))

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on behalf of the PPE Group

Josef Weidenholzer, Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg, Nicola Caputo, Tonino Picula, Goffredo Maria Bettini, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Marc Tarabella, Miroslav Poche, Afzal Khan, Brando Benifei,

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Elena Valenciano Martínez-Orozco

on behalf of the S&D Group

Ryszard Czarnecki, Mark Demesmaeker, Charles Tannock, Janusz Wojciechowski, Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski, Zbigniew Kuźmiuk, Beata Gosiewska, Valdemar Tomaševski, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Karol Karski, Marek Jurek, Marek Józef Gróbarczyk, Stanisław Ożóg, Dawid Bohdan Jackiewicz, Ruža Tomašić, Andrzej Duda

on behalf of the ECR Group

Javier Nart, Johannes Cornelis van Baalen, Dita Charanzová, Louis Michel, Juan Carlos Girauta Vidal, Ramon Tremosa i Balcells, Marietje Schaake, Marielle de Sarnez, Gérard Deprez, Pavel Telička, Jozo Radoš, Ivan Jakovčić, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Petr Ježek, Antanas Guoga, Robert Rochefort

on behalf of the ALDE Group

Heidi Hautala, Tamás Meszerics, Barbara Lochbihler, Alyn Smith, Ernest Urtasun, Indrek Tarand, Jordi Sebastià, Benedek Jávor, Ulrike Lunacek

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Ignazio Corrao, Fabio Massimo Castaldo

European Parliament resolution on human rights in Uzbekistan (2014/2904(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Uzbekistan,
 - having regard to its resolution of 15 December 2011 on the state of implementation of the EU strategy for Central Asia¹,
 - having regard to the EU Strategy for a new Partnership with Central Asia, adopted by the European Council on 21-22 June 2007, and to the joint progress reports by the Commission and the Council of 24 June 2008 and 28 June 2010,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council of October 2009 and 2010,
 - having regard to its resolution of 11 December 2012 on a Digital Freedom Strategy in EU Foreign Policy²,
 - having regard to the EU Human Rights Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline, adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council on 12 May 2014,
 - having regard to the announcement made at the ministerial meeting between the EU and the countries of Central Asia held on 20 November 2013 of the provision, in the context of the EU's Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), of funding of EUR 1 billion for the countries of Central Asia for the period from 2014 to 2020,
 - having regard to Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, although Uzbekistan has made commitments relating to the protection of human rights, including the freedoms of expression, assembly, association and religion guaranteed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the prohibition of torture enshrined in the Convention against Torture, these commitments have yielded few positive results;
- B. whereas the Uzbek authorities have imprisoned thousands of people on politically motivated charges to enforce its repressive rule, targeting human rights and opposition activists, journalists, religious believers, artists and other perceived critics, and whereas Uzbekistan is ranked 166th out of 180 countries on the World Freedom of the Press Index 2014 by Reporters Without Borders, and Freedom House rates the country, its press and internet as 'not free'; whereas digital freedoms are systematically curbed and violated in Uzbekistan;
- C. whereas, among those imprisoned for no reason other than the peaceful exercise of their right

¹ OJ C 168 E, 14.6.2013, p. 91.

² Texts adopted, P7_TA(2012)0470.

to freedom of expression, there are 15 well-known human rights activists¹, five journalists², four peaceful political opposition activists³, and three independent religious figures⁴; whereas seven others are perceived critics of the government or witnesses to the Andijan massacre of 13 May 2005, when Uzbek government forces shot and killed hundreds of mainly peaceful protesters⁵; whereas many of those imprisoned are in serious ill-health, have been tortured and have had their sentences arbitrarily extended in prison;

- D. whereas, when the Uzbek Government has faced sustained external pressure, including sanctions, restrictions on military assistance and other robust, public, specific criticism from its international partners, it has responded by taking incremental steps to improve the human rights situation, including by releasing some individuals imprisoned on politically motivated charges on the eve of key bilateral summits or high-level visits;
- E. whereas the Uzbek Government continues to refuse an independent investigation into the 2005 massacre of hundreds of people in Andijan; whereas over 200 individuals are still serving sentences related to the Andijan events following closed trials that were marred by serious violations of due process and indications that torture may have been used to procure confessions; whereas some of the crimes related to the Andijan massacre and the crime of torture are subject to universal jurisdiction;
- F. whereas in 2009 and 2010 the Council lifted the EU sanctions ‘with a view to encourage the Uzbek authorities to take further substantive steps to improve the rule of law and the human rights situation on the ground’, stating, furthermore that ‘the Council will closely and continuously observe the human rights situation in Uzbekistan’ and that ‘the depth and quality of the dialogue and cooperation will depend on Uzbek reforms’;
- G. whereas according to the latest reports forced labour and child labour in cotton harvesting are still widespread in spite of the Uzbek authorities’ commitment to clamp down on this practice, and whereas, according to the ILO report of 19 November 2013, a million Uzbek citizens, both adults and children, are being forced by the Uzbek Government to harvest cotton under unacceptable conditions and face penalties if they refuse;
- H. whereas the negotiations on Uzbekistan’s accession to the WTO are still ongoing, and whereas the EU-Uzbekistan Partnership and Cooperation Agreement includes a clear clause on respect for democracy and human rights, which the parties are committed to respecting;
1. Stresses the importance of relations between the EU and Uzbekistan and the strengthening of political and economic cooperation, but stresses also that those relations must be based on mutual respect for the principles of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, as is clearly laid down in the EU-Uzbekistan Partnership and Cooperation Agreement;

¹ Azam Farmonov, Mehriniso Hamdamova, Zulhumor Hamdamova, Isroiljon Kholdorov, Nosim Isakov, Gaybullo Jalilov, Nuriddin Jumaniyazov, Matluba Kamilova, Ganikhon Mamatkhanov, Chuyan Mamatkulov, Zafarjon Rahimov, Yuldash Rasulov, Bobomurod Razzokov, Fahriddin Tillaev and Akzam Turgunov

² Solijon Abdurakhmanov, Muhammad Bekjanov, Gayrat Mikhliboev, Yusuf Ruzimuradov, and Dilmurod Saidov

³ Murod Juraev, Samandar Kukanov, Kudratbek Rasulov and Rustam Usmanov

⁴ Ruhiddin Fahriddinov, Hayrullo Hamidov and Akram Yuldashev

⁵ Dilorom Abdukodirova, Botirbek Eshkuziev, Bahrom Ibragimov, Davron Kabilov, Erkin Musaev, Davron Tojiev and Ravshanbek Vafoev

2. Calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all persons imprisoned on politically motivated charges, held for peaceful expression of their political views, civil society activism, journalistic activity or religious views;
3. Stresses that any of the people who have allegedly engaged in acts of violence should be granted a new and fair trial in accordance with international standards and, if found guilty, be subject to criminal and/or administrative sanctions, also in accordance with international standards;
4. Calls on the Uzbek authorities not to allow torture, to put an immediate and unconditional stop to all forms of torture and abuse in prison and ill-treatment in pre-trial detention and penal facilities, including by ensuring unhindered access to counsel at all stages of investigations, ensuring prompt access to appropriate medical care and re-establishing the independent monitoring of prisons, and to provide the families of all prisoners with full information regarding the location and current state of health of their relatives;
5. Urges the Uzbek authorities to investigate and hold to account all officials, security service personnel and penal system staff alleged to have tortured or ill-treated prisoners and detainees or denied requests for medical care;
6. Calls on Uzbekistan to comply with all international recommendations against torture, to order the immediate closure of Jaslyk prison 64/71, to approve the pending requests by 11 UN special procedures to visit Uzbekistan, including the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, and to allow unimpeded independent monitoring of prisons by the International Committee of the Red Cross and other independent monitors;
7. Urges the Uzbek Government to cease the practice of arbitrarily exempting prisoners held on politically motivated charges who qualify for amnesty from annual amnesty declarations and of arbitrarily lengthening prison sentences for minor offences or ‘violations of prison rules’ under Article 221 of the criminal code on ‘disobedience to the terms of punishment’;
8. Calls on the Uzbek authorities to uphold women’s rights, in particular by complying with the recommendations of the UN Committee against Torture;
9. Calls on the EU High Representative, the EEAS and the Member States to immediately put in motion a strategy with the aim of pressing Uzbekistan for concrete, measurable human rights improvements over the coming months, setting next year’s tenth anniversary of the Andijan massacre as a deadline for progress; calls on the EEAS to provide Parliament with information about the representatives of the Uzbek regime who are held to be responsible for the crimes perpetrated in Andijan, including the 12 against whom the EU imposed sanctions in response to the massacre, sanctions which were subsequently lifted;
10. Underlines the fact that concrete improvements should include the conditions laid down by EU Foreign Ministers in 2010, which are: 1) releasing all imprisoned human rights defenders and prisoners of conscience; 2) allowing unimpeded operation of non-governmental organisations in the country; 3) cooperating fully with all relevant UN Special Rapporteurs; 4) guaranteeing freedom of speech and the media; 5) proceeding with practical implementation of conventions against child labour; and 6) fully aligning its election

processes with international standards;

11. Takes the view that, should there be no meaningful progress in these areas, the EU should take the lead and table a UN Human Rights Council resolution under item 4, establishing a dedicated country-specific mechanism for Uzbekistan, ensuring sustained and proactive engagement by the HRC through monitoring, public reporting and debate on the human rights situation in Uzbekistan;
12. Calls on the EU, furthermore, since there is no need to supply the Cooperation Council with relevant information about the situation, this being a case of special urgency, and in accordance with Articles 2 and 95 of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, to put Uzbekistan on notice that, unless there is progress on the above-mentioned human rights concerns within the next six months, the EU will impose targeted punitive measures;
13. Calls on the Member States to comply with the Code of Conduct on Arms Exports and to respect the dual use export regulations;
14. Calls on the Uzbek authorities to fully implement its resolution of 15 December 2011 on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of a Protocol to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement establishing a partnership between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Uzbekistan, of the other part, amending the Agreement in order to extend the provisions of the Agreement to bilateral trade in textiles, taking account of the expiry of the bilateral textiles Agreement¹;
15. Requests that the Council, the Commission and the EEAS provide Parliament with a public assessment of measures taken by the EU to press Uzbekistan to meet the human rights criteria set out by EU Foreign Ministers in 2010, invites the UN Human Rights Council to establish a monitoring mechanism for Uzbekistan, encourages the Council and the Commission to improve their human rights dialogue with the Government of Uzbekistan and expects the EEAS to firmly address all the main cases of human rights violations at the meeting of the EU-Uzbekistan Human Rights Dialogue scheduled for November and to make these meetings more result-oriented, overcoming the current deeply disappointing stalemate;
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President, Government and Parliament of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the EEAS, the Council, the Commission, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the UN Human Rights Council.

¹ OJ C 168 E, 14.6.2013, p. 195.
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